

AN
ESSAY
ON
HUMAN LIFE.

—*Sapientia prima est*
Stultitia caruisse— Hor.

Thomas Colclough 1734

LONDON,

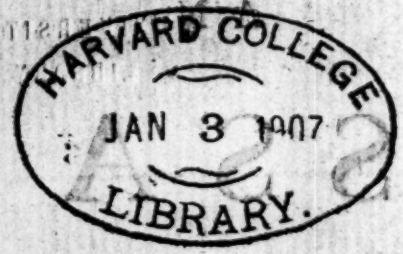
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THE P R E F A C E.

OF all Kinds of Poets, the *Didascalie* is the most valuable, if aiming at the Good of Mankind be what justly entitles any Thing to that Character. The descriptive Kind is like a fine Landskip, where you meet with two or three principal Figures; the rest is all Rocks, Rivulets, hanging Woods and verdant Lawns, amusing to the Eye, shewing the Taste of the Painter, but carrying little Instruction along with it. But the *Didascalie* is like a curious piece of History-painting, where every *Figure* must be *highly wrought*, every Passion strongly represented, all contributing in their several Degrees to express the main Design; in short, it must be a finish'd piece.

That this is a very difficult Work may be collected from the small Number of those Poets who have ever attempted it. In the early Ages of the *Grecians*, I remember none who have wrote any thing in this way but old *Hesiod*, *Aratus*, and *Nicander*;
for

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for *Dionysius*, the *Perigetic*, and * *Oppian*, lived not till the Time of the Roman Emperors. *Hesiod's* Works and Days is the only Piece remaining that is allowed to be genuine without Dispute; but by *Virgil's*, and especially *Manilius's* Compliments to him, it is very probable he wrote others, and perhaps more valuable ones, tho' *Quintilian* allows him the *Palma in illo medio dicendi* only, and *Le Fevre* is much more hard upon him, when he makes him little better than an Almanack-maker, and his Work a mean performance. *PATERCULUS* and *PLUTARCH* set him next to *Homer*, as well in the Value of his Works, as in the period of his Age, says *Mr. Kennet*; but perhaps that may be the other Extream. *Aratus* wrote a Poem, in two Books, which he calls the *PHÆNOMENA*, and *DIOSEMEIA*, the one Astronomical, giving an Account of the Situation and the Affection of the heavenly Bodies, the other Astrological, shewing the particular Influences arising from their various Dispositions and Relations. *TULLY* commends him for his Versification, and *QUINTILIAN* says, he

* *Agefilaus*, *Oppian's* Father, was a Man of great Learning and Merit as well as Wealth and Power, in the City of *Anazarbus* in *Cilicia*, where he lived: *Severus* making a Progress, came to that Town, and *Agefilaus* being not at the Procession to meet the Emperor at his Entrance, probably on the Account of his Age and Infirmities; that Prince, to punish him for so heinous a Crime, banish'd the poor old Man to *Malta*. *Oppian*, to amuse his Father under his Misfortunes, took to writing of Poetry, and afterwards dedicated his *Halicuties* to the Emperor's Son. The Emperor was so pleas'd with the Poem, that he order'd him a piece of Gold for each Line, and offer'd him any other Favour he would ask. The first Part of the Story is not at all wonderful, but I must confess the last Part is a little surprizing.

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has fully answered his Argument, which put together, should make up a pretty good Character. As to *Nicander*, *Vossius* places him amongst his *Greek Historians*, but allows him to have been *egregius Grammaticus, poeta & medicus*. His surviving Works are, however, only Poetry upon Poisons, and the Methods of Cure for them. Of the two latter *Greek Poets*, *DIONYSIUS* and *OPPIAN*, the one wrote a Survey of the World, and the other *CYNEGETICS* and *HALIEUTICS*, in both which it is certain there are very fine Parts, however, Judgments may differ about them.

Amongst the *Romans*, *Lucretius* and *Manilius* may justly be said to be the Chief of the *Didascalie Poets*. They both wrote with all the Fire of their Youth about them; for neither of them lived to be old. I have always fancy'd *Manilius* imitated *Lucretius* in his Manner, the Beginning of his Books being pretty much in the same Way, besides, that he loses no Occasion of lanching out into Descriptions, and is florid to a Fault. He has likewise some Reflections on the Follies of Men, so very much of a Piece with what you meet with in the fifth Book of *Lucretius*, that one would almost think them taken from thence. In general it may be said, they are both very noble Poems, tho' that of *Manilius* is far from being finish'd, as it might have been, if the Author had lived. What Errors are to be found in the Philosophy of the one, and the Astronomy of the other, are owing, perhaps as much to the Age of the World at that Time, as their own, and their Beauties may, in some measure, atone for their Faults.

Virgil's Georgics are in the same Kind, tho' the subjects are of less Dignity; and I don't know whether I might not likewise add *Ovid*, on the Account of his *Fasti*, the most correct of all his Works: *Gratius* too, about the same Time, wrote his *Cynegetics*, which are very justly esteem'd.

Amongst

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Amongst the moderns, *Fracaſtorius's Syphilis*, *Quillet's Callipædia*, and *Vida's Art of Poetry*, are the beſt Poems of this ſort; *Rapin of Gardens*, and *Vanier's prædium Ruſticum*, are not without their merit, but much inferior to the others. In our own Language too we have ſome Poems of this inſtructive Kind: *The Eſſays on poetry*, *Translated Verſe* and *Criticſm* are fine Inſtances of the Worth and Excellency of this manner of writing, to which may be very truly apply'd what Dr. *Young* ſays of Satyr.

*Heroes and Gods make other poems fine,
Plain ſatyr calls for ſenſe in ev'ry Line*.*

The Strength of juſt Obſervations convey'd in ſmooth and flowing Numbers, has a prevailing Influence, inſinuates itſelf into the Mind almoſt imperceptibly, and makes a more laſting Impreſſion there than one would eaſily imagine. 'Tis true theſe Subjects are purely Critical, and ſo of leſs Conſequence to Mankind in general, but yet, poliſhing the Underſtanding, improving the Judgment, and regulating the Taſte, are far from being Things indifferent to the World, ſince they tend not a little to the ſhaming out of it, that Ruſticity and Barbariſm, thoſe Follies and Affectations, in one Word, all that Littleneſs of Mind which is ſo effectual a Bar in the Way of generous and noble Undertakings. But we have had of late an undeniable Proof that the fineſt and moſt uſeful Sort of Philoſophy, which conſiſts in the Knowledge of ourſelves, may be convey'd in ſuch clear, ſtrong, eaſy, and affecting Strains, at the ſame Time convincing and captivating the Underſtanding, that there remains no Doubt but that Poetry in the Hands of a Great Genius may be made as beneficial as ever it has been entertaining to Mankind. The latter Effect is indeed what
has

* Univerſal Paſſion, Sat. II.

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has been generally most aim'd at, as it is compass'd with the Writer, and meets with a more universal Reception amongst the common Sort of Readers. Imagery, * fine Colouring, and bright Antitheses, often disguise the want of Justness, and Force, and by pleasing the *Imagination*, do, as it were, steal away from the Judgment, or sometimes impose upon it, as Shadows pass for Substances with weak, distemper'd, or fanciful Minds.

The *Os magna sonatorum* of *Horace* would make one almost think the Muse must never appear without her Buskins, and that all Simplicity of Expression were to be totally banished out of Poetical Writings.

'Tis true, the *Epic Poem*, the *Ode*, and the *Tragedy* very often require, and consequently justify the Use of elevated Language, as it may be more suitable to the Greatness of the Subjects, and better fitted to raise the several Passions they are designed to work upon.

But where the Appeal lies only to the Understanding, self-evident Truths, naturally and beautifully expressed, can never fail of the Approbation of a sound Head and a good Taste; and even *Horace* himself, as elevated and great a Poet as he must be allowed in his Odes, appears to much more Advantage in his *Sermones* and *Epistles*, where, as my Lord Roscommon observes on another Occasion.

Fancy labours less, but Judgment more.

Sir *John Denham's Cooper's Hill* has met with universal Applause, tho' its Subject seems rather descriptive than instructing; but it is not the Hill, the River, nor the Stag Chace, 'tis the good Sense and the fine Reflec-

* *Nec in urbem nec turbæ carmina condam.*

Manil. L. II.

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tions so frequently interspersed, and as it were interwoven with the rest, that gives it the Value, and will make it, as was said of true Wit, *everlasting like the Sun.*

The late Mr. *Prior's Solomon* seems to have cost him much Time and Pains, and was, I believe, his favourite Performance: He is in some doubt whether to call it a *Didascalie* or *Heroic Poem*. It has indeed something of both, and yet strictly speaking is perfectly neither: it has not Fable, Machinery, nor Variety enough to be an *Heroic Poem*, and it is too diffusive and luxuriant in the Style, too florid and full of Descriptions to be of the *Didascalie* Sort. In general it may be justly said to be a very fine Piece; tho' I must confess I cannot help giving the Preference to his *Alma*, in which the Design is more closely pursued, carried on with more Spirit, and never loses your Attention.

Upon the whole, what Mr. *Dryden* has said in the Preface to his *Religio Laici*, is, I think, very true. "The Expressions of a Poem, design'd purely for Instruction, ought to be plain and natural, and yet majestic: For here the Poet is presumed to be a Kind of Lawgiver, and those three Qualities which I have nam'd are proper to the legislative Style. The florid, elevated and figurative Way, is for the Passions; for Love and Hatred, Fear and Anger are begotten in the Soul by shewing their Objects out of their true proportion; either greater than the Life or less; but Instruction is to be given by shewing them what they naturally are. A Man is to be cheated into Passion, but reason'd into Truth."

The following short Piece may be perhaps a little too pompously introduced by the foregoing Observations; all I shall say for it is, I endeavoured to follow Mr. *Dryden's* Rules: How far I have succeeded, I can be no proper Judge myself. But whatever may be said of the Poetry, and

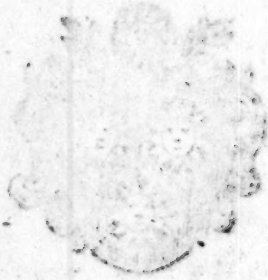
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and about that I am very indifferent ; the Sentiments must surely be allow'd to be just and good ; and I am entirely of Mr. *Prior*'s Opinion : " I had rather be thought " a good *Englishman*, (which is but another Word for " an honest Man) than the best Poet or the greatest " Scholar that ever wrote."



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most likely to show I to be just and good; and I am
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a good Englishman (which is but another Name for
an honest Man) than the best Poet or the greatest
Scholar that ever wrote."





A N
E S S A Y
O N
H U M A N L I F E.



Leasure but cheats us with an empty Name,
Still seems to vary, yet is still the same;
Amusement's all its utmost Skill can boast,
By Use it lessens, and in Thought is lost.
The Youth that riots, and the Age that hoards,
Folly that sacrifices Things to Words;

Pride, Wit and Beauty in one Taste agree,
'Tis sensual, or 'tis mental Luxury.

Sad State of Nature, doom'd to fruitless Pain,

Something to wish and want, but never gain:

Restless we live, and disappointed die,

Unhappy, tho' we know not how nor why.

Reason, perhaps may lend her gen'rous Aid;

Reason, which never yet her Trust betray'd:

Let her direct us in the doubtful Strife,

Let her conduct us thro' the Maze of Life.

Is Human Reason then from Weakness free?

Partakes she not of our Infirmary?

Can she apply, with never failing Art,

The healing Balsam to the wounded Part?

Correct those Errors which the Passions cause,

And teach the Will to follow Wisdom's Laws?

Alas Experience but too plainly shews,

That Man can act against the Truth he knows:

By

By Customs led, or by Allurements won,
Discern that Evil, which he cannot shun
Whate'er we do, the Motive's much the same,
'Tis Impulse governs under Reason's Name ;
Each eagerly some fav'rite End pursues,
And diff'rent Tempers furnish diff'rent Views.

Is it for Fear of Wrong, or Love of Right,
The Statesmen labour, or that Warriors fight ?
T'enrich his Country, does the Sailor brave
The cruel Pirate, and the threat'ning Wave ?
In Search of Truth, unwearied Sages try,
By certain Rules, to fix Uncertainty ?
No ! 'tis Desire and Hope that drives them on :
Thus greatest Things for meanest Ends are done.

Self-Love, howe'er disguis'd, misunderstood,
Howe'er misplac'd, is still the sov'reign Good :
Virtue or Wisdom but the vain Pretence,
These may direct, but Passions influence.
Presumptuous Man ! why boasts thou thy Free-Will,
By Constitution doom'd to Good or Ill ?
What feeble Checks are all those studied Rules,
Unpractis'd Lessons of the useless Schools ?
Say, can thy Art, oppos'd to Nature's Force,
Obstruct her Motions, or suspend her Course ?
Go, change in *Africa* their sable Hue,
Or make our *Europe* bring her Negroes too ;
Roll back the Tides, forbid the Streams to flow,
Nor let this Earth returning Seasons know.
Save to thyself, whilst Lord of all beside,
Surmount thy Weakness, or renounce thy Pride.

That moving Pow'r which first produc'd the Whole,
To ev'ry Thing has fix'd a certain Goal :
Thither all tend, and must their Circles run,
For such the Order when the Whole begun.
To diff'rent Creatures, diff'rent Ranks assign'd,
Man claims the first, as of a nobler Kind ;
How just that Claim, what Wisdom must decide ?
Reason is his alone, by which 'tis try'd :
Inferior Creatures silently submit,
'Tis his to talk, and therefore to have Wit,
Thus haughty *Greece* despis'd the World around,
And barb'rous, all she understood not, found.

Look o'er the wide Creation, see how all
Its several Parts obey the Maker's Call ;

The Earth how fertile, and how rich the Sea,
In various Salts, for Nature's Chymistry;
Here Air digests, what burning Suns exhale,
And Dews and Snows, and Rain, by Turns, prevail.
Beasts, Birds and Reptiles, see 'em all conspire,
To act whate'er their sev'ral States require,
But wiser Man disdains their meaner Part,
Nature with him must still give Way to Art,
Vain of Conceit, he boasts his fancy'd Skill,
And, arbitrary, rules the World at Will,
Now fierce and cruel, then as mild and kind.
Each Action owing to each Turn of Mind:
One Day a Friend, the next as great a Foe,
As Humour, Pique, Caprice, or Int'rest go:
Wisdom and Folly thus, by Turns, preside,
And Chance alone inclines to either Side.

Ask the bold Freeman, or the coward Slave,
What makes one abject, and the other brave?
What gives to Fools their Faith, to Knaves their Wiles,
To Cynick's Sow'rness, and to Flatt'ers Smiles?
This one great Truth must stand by all confess,
Some ruling Passion lurks in ev'ry Breast;
That Weakness by a specious Name they call,
For 'tis that Weakness still which governs all.

Wisely the Springs of Action we conceal,
Thus Sordidness is Prudence, Fury, Zeal;
Ambition makes the public Good her Care,
And Hypocrites the Mask of Saintship wear.

Inur'd to Falshood; we ourselves deceive,
Oft what we wish we fancy we believe;
We call that Judgment which is only Will,
And as we act, we learn to argue ill;
Like Bigots, who their various Creeds defend,
By making Reason still to System bend.

Customs or Int'rest governs all Mankind,
Some Biass cleaves to the unguarded Mind;
Thro' this, as in a false and flatt'ring Glass,
Things seem to change their Natures as they pass.
Objects the same in diff'rent Lights appear,
And but the Colours which we give 'em wear.
Error and Fraud from this great Scourge arise,
All Fools are modish, and all Knaves are wise.
Who does not boast some Merit of his own,
Tho' to himself perhaps 'tis only known?

Each

Each suits Reward to his own fav'rite Vice,
 Pride has its Crowns, and Lust its Paradise:
 Bonzes, Priest and Dervise, all in this agree,
 That Heaven must be Pomp or Luxury;
 Man, Slave to Sense, no higher Bliss can know,
 Still measures Things above by Things below.
 Joy's much the same, but differ in Degree,
 As Time enlarg'd becomes Eternity.

How vain is all that Science we pursue!
 Scorn'd by the Many, useles to the Few;
 Since short of Truth our utmost Labours end,
 Who knows but Ign'rance is our greatest Friend?
 The fruitless Pains but shew the Weakness more,
 And we, like Misers, 'midst our Wealth are poor.
 Much hoarded Learning but like Lumber lies,
 Or ends in Gueswork and Obscurities.

What tho' proud *Greece* her seven *Sages* boast?
 The Names alone remain, the Race is lost.
Satyrs and *Centaurs* too, might live of old,
 (For so we are in ancient Story told)
 But shou'd we doubt in this our faithless Age;
 Who can produce a *Centaur*, or a *Sage*?
 Such mighty Births were Nature's first Essays,
 The lusty Off-spring of her youthful Days;
 Our later Times can no such Wonders shew,
 But what were *Giants* then are *Pigmies* now.

Of all the painful Follies of Mankind,
 Still to be seeking what they ne'er must find,
 Is sure the greatest, not unlike the Toil;
 Of him who labours in a barren Soil.
 Beyond our State if our fond Wishes tend,
 Means must be vain where we mistake the End.
 Pride whispers mighty Projects in the Ear,
 Bids us be great, be wise, be happy here;
 But sad Experience shews the Laws of Fate,
 And teaches us to know ourselves too late.

Error is a Distemper of the Mind,
 Hard to be cured, because 'tis hard to find,
 So mixt and blended with our very Frame,
 It lurks secure and borrows Reason's Name,
 In different Persons different Ways it springs,
 'Tis Faction in Subjects, Pride in Kings;
 Boundless alike they in Extreams agree,
 These in Oppression, those in Anarchy.

Both aim at what 'twere Ruin to obtain,
A civil Frenzy, or a Tyrant Reign.

The Wise must into Nature's Secrets pry,
The Weak believe they know not what, nor why.
And we may equally deluded call,
Who doubt of nothing, as who doubt of all.
Profane or pious, Bigotry's the same,
The Motives Terror, Avarice, or Fame,
Opinion is but Int'rest in Disguise,
And right and Wrong in Strength of Parties lies.

Some wou'd be happy, know not Want nor Care,
Others still find more Evils than there are;
Whilst Truth unheeded in the Midway lies,
And all Extreams are like Absurdities.

Wrong Turns of Head are Nature's greatest Curse,
Improving every Day from bad to worse.
In some odd Light all Objects still they view,
Thus true with them is false, and false is true.
In Trifles solemn, diligent and wise,
Important Things as Trifles they despise;
Caressing Enemies, their Friends they shun,
And doat on knaves, by whom they are undone,
Deaf to Advice, or taking Wrong for Right,
They boldly blunder on in Reason's Spite;
And under clearer Light's obscure Pretence,
Are the Antipodes of common Sense.

Wou'd you persuade a Wretch intent on Pelf,
Tho' he starves others, not to starve himself;
To fence, at least, his sapless Trunk from Cold,
Nor seem as fond of Tattars as of Gold;
No! he's too cunning for your sly Design.
You'd have him like yourself, be poor and fine;
But he in Spite of Envy richer grows,
And Scorns the Luxury of Meat and Cloaths.
Ask the ambitious why he wastes his Life,
In needless Struggles and uncertain Strife?
Why not in Peace enjoy what Plenty gives,
So the obscure, the weak, the lazy lives;
Exalted Spirits have a nobler Aim,
And know no Happiness but Toil and Pain.

Well! must it suit a selfish hollow Heart,
To act the honest Patriot's gen'rous Part;
No Tool of Party, nor no Slave of State,
No mean Dependant on the guilty Great;

Boldly he pleads for Liberty and Laws,
 Content to perish in his Country's Cause;
 When lo! a Ray divine of Favour gleams,
 Quite different Topicks then become his Themes,
 Old Friends, old Notions, are at once forgot,
 And Shame and Wages are the Hireling's Lot.

The little Mind whose Joy in Mischiefs lies,
 Hates all Mankind, but most the Good and Wise.
 Proud of his Shame, he boasts his spiteful Skill,
 And places all his Worth in doing ill.
 But base-born Fear oft checks what Rage devis'd,
 And leaves him disappointed and despis'd.
 Endless the Task to point the various Ways,
 How each wrong Head its different Gifts displays;
 How Poverty in Boasts its Wants would hide,
 And Meanness shews itself in awkward Pride;
 How Knaves are cunning at their own Expence,
 And Coxcombs fancy Forwardness is Sense.
 Vain is th'Attempt to be what Heav'n denies,
 As vain the Art that Weakness to disguise.
 Prudence alone can teach the useful Skill,
 T'improve the Good, and to correct the Ill.
 True Wisdom lies in Practice more than Rules,
 For what are Maxims when apply'd to Fools?
 Of Wit and Folly reason all you can,
 Who acts most wisely is the wisest Man.

Each State of Life has its peculiar View,
 Alike in each, there is a false and true:
 This Point to fix is Reason's Use and End,
 On this Success all other must depend:
 But in this Point no Error can be small,
 To deviate e'er so little, ruins all.
 The Mark once miss'd, however near you aim,
 Miss'd by an inch or Furlong, 'tis the same:
 Who sets out wrong is more than half undone,
 Error has many Ways, and Truth but one.

Wrong estimates wrong Conduct must produce,
 They lose the Blessing that mistake its Use:
 Who value Wealth or Pow'r but more or less
 As that can riot, or as this oppresses;
 What say they else but that they both are given;
 To execute the Wrath of angry Heaven.

Fools ever vain, at some Distinction aim,
 And fancy Madness is the Way to Fame;

No Matter how the deathless Names acquir'd,
By Countries ravag'd, or a * Temple fir'd :
Alike transmitted down to latest Times,
A *Trajan's* Virtues, and a *Nero's* Crimes.
Means are indiff'rent to the End's obtain'd,
Richard † was guilty, but what then? he reign'd.
Wou'd you be Good and Great, the Hope is vain,
The Bus'ness is not to deserve but gain:
Fortune is fickle, and but short her Stay,
He comes too late that takes the farthest Way.

Is this, Oh Grandeur! then thy envy'd State,
To raise Men's Wonder and provoke their Hate?
By Crimes procur'd, and then in Fear enjoy'd,
By Mobs applauded, and by Mobs destroy'd.
Say, mighty Cunning, which deserve the Prize,
The Courtier's Promises or Trader's Lies?
Some short-liv'd profit, all the pains rewards,
Of Bankrupt Dealers, and of perjur'd Lords.

Honest alike, you own, but wiser far,
The Knave upon the Bench then at the Bar.
Where lies the Difference? only in Degree,
And higher Rank is greater infamy.
Poor Rogues in Chains but dangle to the Wind,
Whilst rich ones live the Terror of Mankind.

Pomp, Pow'r and Riches, all meer Trifles are,
When purchas'd by the Loss of Character:
Chance may the Wise betray, the Brave defeat,
But they correct, or are above their Fate.
Credit once lost can never be retriev'd,
How few will trust the Man who once deceiv'd?
Craft, like the Mole, works only under Ground.
Is lost in Daylight, and destroy'd when found.

Notions mistaken, Reas'nings ill apply'd,
And Sophisms that conclude on either Side;
Alike th'Unweary, and the Weak mislead,
Who judge of Men and Things, as they succeed.

* Erostratus, a very obscure Man, set Fire to the Temple of Diana at Ephesus, in Order to immortalize his Name, and has succeeded in it, in Spite of all endeavours to the contrary.

† Richard the Usurper.

Did † Rivals fall by *Borgia's* vile Deceit,
 A ‖ *Machiavel* will call a *Borgia* great;
 The lucky Cheat proclaims the Villain wife,
 And Fraud and Murther are but policies.
 The same Despair which made good *Cato* die,
 To *Cæsar* gave his last great * Victory:
 Had Right decided, and not Fate, the Cause,
 Rome had preserv'd her *Cato*, and her Laws.

Fortune sets off the Bad, as tawdry Dress,
 Shews but the more the Wearer's Homeliness.
 So mad *Caligula's* † vain Triumph tell,
 That all his Conquests are but Cockle Shells.
 True Merit shines in native Splendor bright,
 Whilst false but glares awhile, and hurts the Sight;
 As Midnight Vapours cast a glimm'ring Blaze,
 And to the Darknes owe their feeble Rays.
 The wise *† *Egyptians* when their Monarch dy'd,
 By Truth's sure Standard all his actions try'd.
 When no false Lustre, Wealth, or Pow'r appears,
 To bias Judgment by its Hopes or Fears;
 Then conqu'ring Chiefs, profuse of Subjects Blood,
 And lazy Dotards, indolently good:
 That trust their People to a Fav'rit's Care,
 Whose peaceful Rapines cost'em more than War,
 By injur'd Thousand Wrongs are doom'd to be,
 Perpetual Marks of Scorn and Infamy.

Fortune with Fools, and Wit with Knaves you find,
 'Tis social Virtue shews the noble Mind.
 Above low Wisdom, Cunning's mean Pretence,
 There is no counterfeiting Excellence:
 The artful Head may act the honest part,
 But all true Honour rises from the Heart.

† Vitelli and Orsini basely betray'd and murder'd by Order of the Duke of Valentinois.

‡ Il Princip. Cap. vii.

* The Battle of Munda against Pompey's Son.

† Caligula drew up his Army in Battle Array on the Coast, and then order'd them to gather Shells, for which great Exploit he return'd to Rome in Triumph. See Suetonius.

*† See Diodorus Siculus in the First Book.

Which serv'd his Country best, let Story shew,
 A guilty *Clodius*, or good *Cicero*?
 Faults are in all; but here the Difference lies,
Clodius had Vices, *Tully* Vanities.
 Who loves Mankind by social Duty taught,
 Will never think their Good too dearly bought.
 What tho' he sacrifice the vain Desire
 Of some gay Baubles, which the World admire?
 Despising Riches and abhorring pow'r,
 When blasted with the Name of plunderer.
 Still he may take Life's greatest Good, Content,
 For who so happy as the Innocent?

Jugurtha * murder'd brib'd and fought his Way,
 From Subject Station to Imperial Sway;
 But insecure 'midst all his guilty State,
 The Man was wretched, tho' the Monarch great;
 Like *Cromwell* daring in the doubtful Fight,
 But pale and trembling in the Dead of Night.

Passion is lawless, headstrong Youth is mad,
 But Nature varies not in Good and Bad.
 From the same Causes same Effects must flow,
 Truth is but what it was an Age ago;
 Modes may be chang'd, but Truths are stubborn Things,
 They court not Fav'rites, nor will flatter Kings.

Rome had her *Cæsar*, and our *Cromwell* we,
 Alike in Fortune, Pow'r and Infamy;
 And shou'd new *Cæsars* and new *Cromwells* rise,
 They could but act the same dull Tragedies;
 Foes to Mankind, themselves, and Virtue's Rules,
 Whilst living Heroes, and when dead but Fools.

Fools, not to know the Glory they pursue,
 To honest Bravery alone, is due;
 Nor he who stretches his unjust Command,
 And rudely triumphs o'er his native Land;
 But he whose Valour saves a sinking State,
 In future Annals shall be call'd the Great.

View well this World, and own the dear bought Truth,
 That Happiness is but the Dream of Youth;
 State of Perfection, not for Man design'd,
 Howe'er the fond Idea fills his Mind;

* King of Numidia, famous for his Wars with the Roman's;
 remarkable for his Bravery and his Crimes.

Itself an Evil, whilst to Good it tends,
 But in a Round of Disappointments ends.
 Man's State in Life's uncertain, mixt at best,
 Conduct some little does, but Fate the rest :
 Fantastick Fate ! to Merit ever blind,
 Whilst lavish to the worst of all mankind.

Judge then by outward Things, you're sure to err,
 And inward lie remote, few look so far,
 Appearances still guide, and still deceive,
 For giddy Crowds must wonder and believe.

Who sees gay *Codrus* loll in gilt Machine,
 Grand his Attendance, and self-pleas'd his Mien,
 Can he imagine all these Trapings hid,
 A Wretch made up of folly, Guilt and Pride ?
 Greedy to get, as he's profuse to spend,
 Stiff, when attended, servile to attend ;
 Good but by Accident, by Habit bad,
 In Reas'ning specious, and in Acting mad.

Princes we blame for Benefits misplac'd,
 Some ill Man rais'd, perhaps some good disgrac'd :
 Cruel their Lot ! whom Numbers join to blind,
 How hard, 'midst Labyrinths, the Way to find !
 For Fortune's Sons we see, without Surprise,
 Thrive by Mismanagements, by Blunders rise :
 Events, like Atoms, jumbling in a Dance,
 Create these Wonders like a World by Chance.

Search Time's Records, compare the old and new,
 Set distant Ages in one Point of View ;
 Still the same Prospects, under diff'rent Dates,
 And dark Decrees of overruling Fates :
 Madness succeed, where cautious Wisdom fails,
 And Story's self more strange than Fairy's Tales :
 Reason but seeks the hidden Clue in vain.
 Lost and bewilder'd in th' entangl'd Scane,

Where then the Wonder, if succeeding Times
 Still vary only in the Kinds of Crimes ?
 Ages of Iron, Silver, Gold, or Lead,
 What are they but the Emblems of the Dead ?
 The same low Ends, by diff'rent Means obtain'd,
 As Fury, Avarice, or Folly reign'd.

In vain grave Moralists with specious Skill,
 Nicely distinguish Actions, good and ill.
 The World is led by much more easy Rules,
 Success determines who are Wise or Fools.

Causes lie hid, but their Effects appear,
Few Men can Judge, but all can see and hear.

Each Age must truckle to the reigning Modes,
And worship Devils, when they've made them Gods;
Call Rapine Industry, Distraction Sense,
And stupid Squandering Magnificence.
No Folly, Crime, or Whim too wild to be
Admir'd, when drest in Fashion's Livery.

See the same Nations variously receiv'd,
Legends, Impostures, every Thing believ'd;
See Priests and Tyrants full Obedience find,
And sacred Gibberish enslave Mankind.
View next, with Wonder, an Extreme as odd,
Who knelt to Carv'd work, now denies a God.
Wretches from Chains and Bondage just set free,
Presumptuous! know no Bounds of Liberty.
Wicked or Pious in a frantic Way,
Mad, they blaspheme, or superstitious, pray.

By chance we live and act, now right, now wrong,
Both in Excess, and therefore neither long;
Virtues too rigid, soften by Degrees,
Refine themselves at first to Policies;
When once declining, swiftly downwards tend,
And then in Guilt and Prostitutions end.
Follies, tho' opposite, yet still combine,
And jointly carry on Heav'n's great Design.
Changes of Manners Change of Empire cause,
States sink by Licence as they rose by Laws.
Thus human Things their stated Circles run,
Who flourish one Age are the next undone.

Virtue alone, unchangeable and wise,
Secure, above the Reach of Fortune lies:
Tho' doom'd to Meanness, Poverty or Scorn,
Whilst Fools and Tyrants are to Empire born:
Blest in an humble, but a peaceful State,
She feels no Envy, and she fears no Hate:
With Stoick Calmness views Life's empty Round,
Where Good is sparing sown, but Ills abound.

F I N I S.